

Mussar HaMadda

Chofetz Chaim of Philadelphia /Chofetz Chaim University Publication

14 Adar, 5758

Green Eggs & Ham

**EXTRAVAGANCE-
Anything you buy
that you can't put
on a credit card**

**פרנסה איז
א שווער!**

**נכנס יין,
יצא סעודה!**

"I COULD NOT, WOULD NOT, ON A BOAT... I DO NOT LIKE THEM HERE OR THERE. I DO NOT LIKE THEM ANYWHERE." (HAM 3:26)

Poor guy. Our anonymous tragic hero started off so strongly in his *emunah* on the injunction against eating pork. In fact, on page 9 he sits on his chair and lambastes that Sam-I-am character to the whole reading audience, presumably for being a *sonai Hashem* who incites other people into sin. (This was in pious emulation of his *rebbe*, a noted Gadol.) What's more, he appears in the book with a black hat, beard, and even long *payos* on the side of his head! Apparently, a very righteous individual indeed. Yet, by the end of the book, he ate *treif* and switched sides, *challilah!*

This is mystifying. How could such an apparently righteous individual stoop to such a low level that he'll eat pork? He had such long *payos*, a black hat, and even a beard. If he was keeping the littlest *chumros*, surely the big things like *chazer* he'd be able to resist!

True, our anonymous tragic hero dressed very *frum*, and yes, he was strongly against Sam-I-am, and of course against eating pork. However, the true source of his *frumkeit* was not a desire to get closer to Hashem, or even a desire to repent for past sins, but a *netiyah* towards *sin'ah*, which manifested itself as a *frummeh negiyah*. His whole approach to religion was to find ways to legitimize his antisocial behavior. Everything was to be viewed upon with a "holier-than-thou" attitude. Therefore, if something wasn't allowed, it must be hated, instead of just avoided. If someone wasn't on the *derech*, he must be hated and *nidcheh beshtei yadayim* - pushed away with two hands (or whatever those furry things are), instead of being a target of warm *kiruv* efforts. Sam-I-am took him around town and showed him that, according to this viewpoint, he'd have to also hate a box, a fox, a goat, a boat, here, there, etc. So it must be, reasoned Sam-I-am, that humanism and tolerance towards others was the right way. Then, he discovered he actually **liked** green eggs and ham. The entire foundation for his religious beliefs gone, he had no choice other than to lamentably go whole hog with Sam-I-am's lampoon of religion. He never realized that one could like pork while still being forbidden to eat it. Similarly, one could like Sam-I-am and still hate his destructive religious viewpoints. If he had a proper *hashkafa* outlook, he would have turned to Sam-I-am and said, "Why you tricky little devil! Of course I like spam-I-am, but it's *treif!* and can't be eaten!"

It is extremely important to make sure we adjust our whims to fit in with Yiddishkeit, instead of warping Yiddishkeit to fit our whims. Similarly, we should all make sure that our reason for doing *mitzvos* is *lishmoh*, not for *kavod* or, *chas v'sholom*, as an excuse to ridicule other people. Finally, the whole problem could have been prevented if the *frummie* had a *rebbe* to teach him right from wrong. We must all stay the full 14 years in Chofetz Chaim, learning from the **Rosh Hayeshivah SHLIT" A** the difference between right and wrong. Otherwise, we could end up "bacon" in Gehinnom's large frying pan.

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